

## *2<sup>nd</sup> Presiding Elder William Madison Wall*

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HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS



William Madison Wall, for whom Wallsburg was named, and his five wives, Nancy, Emma, Elizabeth, Suzie and Sarah.

ever, he warned them that the first one to break in would be killed. No one volunteered to be first.

The next morning, as he left the hotel, Elder Wall was surrounded by a mob brandishing ropes and threatening to "string him up." He felt almost as if his time to die had come, and asked to speak a few last words. He said in his journal, later:

"I had one little wish to impress upon their minds, and that was that some of them had to die in the operation and I did not wish to kill any man that had a drop of honest blood in him; if there were any such men I begged them to withdraw and let the worst hounds they had remain to do the deed, as I should certainly kill three or four."

Apparently all in the mob felt honest for Elder Wall went free.

Returning to Provo, he was appointed marshal of Provo and then sheriff of Utah County.

His tenure as sheriff was often bullet-punctuated since the friction between Mormons and anti-Mormons was high, and federal troops commanded by General Johnston were also stationed in Utah County.

The Deseret News of Jan. 6, 1859, noted briefly that "last Friday

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evening when W. M. Wall, Marshal of Provo, was walking through the streets of that city a ball was shot through his hat and grazed his head and knocked him down."

Wall was also one of the most skillful Indian negotiators among the Mormons and frequently served assignments for President Brigham Young in pacifying the Indians. Many of his dealings with the Indians are discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

"Provo" Valley was discovered early in the 1850's by three men who climbed the Wasatch Range from Big Cottonwood canyon and descended the western slopes of the valley. Their report created much interest and ways were immediately sought to get into the valley. By 1855 or '56 the pioneers began taking their cattle in via an Indian trail that began near Pleasant Grove, up Grove Creek over the northwest end of Timpanogos, down Bear canyon to the left fork of American Fork canyon, up this canyon to the summit and thence down into the Midway area.

On the 19th of January 1855 the State Legislature incorporated the Provo Canyon Road Co. which authorized Aaron Johnson, Thomas S. Williams, Evan M. Green and William Wall to build a road up Provo Canyon. Very little was done at this time, however. In June of 1856 William M. Wall was called on a mission to serve in Australia. He returned late in 1857, having been called home because of the Johnston's Army affair. Early in 1858, he and others began talking about the "road" again and on June 8, 1858 Brigham Young called a meeting at Provo, organized a new Company and work was started immediately. The road was to go from Provo through Provo Canyon to the Kamas Bench and thence on to the "Mormon Trail" in Weber Canyon. \$19,000.00 was allocated for the cost of the road, much of which was paid for in "Deseret Script."

A large bridge in Provo Canyon was completed about the 13th of October and by the 12th of Nov. 1858 the road was near enough completed that "100 teamsters started for the United States over the new road." (Deseret News, Nov. 12, 1858).

The first group of settlers to go into the valley over the new road were George Washington Bean, William Meeks, Aaron Daniels and William Wall. The Beans and Walls settled near the neck of the canyon in the south end of the valley, where they had established their headquarters during the construction of the road. Daniels and Meeks went further north.

George Washington Bean, a surveyor and Indian interpreter, had with his brother, James, been very active in getting the new road built. George W. Bean was the first to take up ground in Round Valley and in the fall of 1860 he sold his holdings in Provo Valley to his father-in-law, William M. Wall, so he could spend his entire efforts improving his holdings in Round Valley. He mentions in his writings about having to go by way of Salt Lake City and Park City to get to their ranch because of the floods of 1862. By 1864 he was no longer in Round Valley.